

## THE LOOKMAN REPORT 2023

### Week Seventeen – Tepper Tantrum

*"You know if I was going to do anything I'd put it out there on Twitter and MyFace so everybody could see that. But if I don't do that, then I'll just keep it private." – Hall of Fame HC Bill Belichick joked when asked whether he was being retained by New England. Belichick's disdain of social media is well chronicled.*

#### PROLOGUE

The intrigue over head coaching has risen all the way to the top, with Belicheat rumored to be out at New England. Tack on the stellar jobs by young Turks like Ben Johnson in Detroit, Mike MacDonald in Baltimore and Brian Flores in Minnesota, and you have a recipe for Black Monday after Week Eighteen. Tack on the likely departure of Jim (the Milk Man) Harbaugh at Michigan, and the recipe becomes a five-star meal.

The Look Man doesn't know what is going to happen, but there are appealing jobs at the Bolts, Black Cats and Raiders. (Riverboat) Ron Rivera is likely gone in DC, and interim HC Antonio Pierce and GM Champ Kelly have turned around a floundering Raiders team. First year HC DeMeco Ryans shows what a team can do with a good signal caller and hope springs Eternal for owners.



*Johnson and MacDonald are the top offensive and defensive guys*

That ownership group includes David Tepper at Carolina, who tossed a drink on a Jacksonville fan in his loge. Tepper was irritated that the fans were giving him grief over his dysfunctional organization getting a beat down by a backup QB in Week Seventeen.

Tepper was fined a paltry \$300K, which amounts to about \$50 when prorated for the average fan. That fine is a disgrace and underscores the NFL double standard for players and owners.

Without further ado, the week that was...

#### LAGNIAPPE

##### Pro Bowl Snubs

The Pro Bowl has become passe these days, with the game being contested in Orlando, and the fact that it is not really a game at all. But the Look Man identified a few key snubs as follow:

Stillers safety (that little) Minkah Fitzpatrick was selected ahead of Baltimore's Geno ('s East) Stone, who has seven picks in 2023. Stone has been terrific, covering for injuries at corner. Of all of his abilities, the best might be 'availability.' Fitzpatrick has missed six games this year, and his cheap shot on Nick Chubb rivals only Denver's Kareem Jackson for cheapness. Stone was the 2023 version of the Nati's Jessie

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Bates, and he is going to get paid soon. In the meantime, this snub is going to motivate him the Tournament.

The Pokes' Zach Martin got the nod at OG based upon historical performance alone. The Look Man likes Detroit's Graham Glasgow and the Rams Kevin Dotson more. Both have played well this year, with Glasgow also playing center when Frank Ragnow(rok) was injured.

It's ironic that DeMarcus (DH) Lawrence was shafted after playing at an All-Pro level in 2023. This man has dominated in Dallas' wins, going all Lady Chatterley's Lover on offensive lines. He grades as one of the NFL's best edge rushers, but also plays on the interior and destroys quarterbacks. This is perhaps the biggest snub of all.



*This man has taken over several games in 2023...*

### ZEBRA OF THE WEEK

*What happened last night...*

The pattern of awful officiating received an exclamation point last week in Big D. Brad (Little Head) Allen made a mess of a decent game, culminating in the failed two-point conversion. McCarthy and Campbell played significant roles as well.

Allen is the self-same zebra who failed to call DPI in the KC-Green Bay game where Marquez Valdez-Scantling was turned into a grocery store pony by a Cheesehead DB. He has a history of awful calls, and the Look Man believes he will suffer the same fate as Phil Lockett, who was terminated for a coin toss error.

Longtime Tailpipe GB Shaw launched a preemptive strike:

*I think I know the POV the Look Man will take on that clip from Saturday Night's game that's getting more frame-by-frame analysis than the Zapruder film, but I would like to humbly submit some counter-points:*

*On the previous drive, Dallas TE was called for tripping, a PF and 15-yarder, effectively killing the drive. I've seen the footage -- not only did Schoonwhatever NOT trip Hutchinson, it was clearly Hutchinson who attempted to trip Pollard. Pretty blatant, too. That call represented a 30-yard swing at a crucial moment in the game. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQAIQk4brCI>)*

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*No fewer than three different Lion O linemen are talking to the ref immediately prior to the Zapruder Film 2-point conversion. Unless it's to perform the disputed Eligible Check-in, why were the others even there? I think Dan Campbell was trying to confuse the zebras, and succeeded.*

*When the zebra announced to the Defense who was eligible, his mike was on. The entire stadium, plus Dan Campbell, could have heard the declaration, if they were listening. I think Campbell did hear, and thought he would get away with a little trickery.*

*Even if we take the entire Campbell narrative as true, the Lions were still guilty of a procedure penalty. Number 70, being declared eligible, had to be positioned at the end of the line of scrimmage. He was not. All the focus is on whether or not 68 declared eligibility. What about 70? And, if he wasn't, why was he talking to the ref? Also, if he wasn't, why didn't any Lion say something when the zebra said he was (again, with the mike on)?*

*The prevailing narrative doesn't add up. There's a YouTube video asserting the Jerry Jones bribed the zebras (may I remind the court of the first bullet?). Even Skip Bayless is on that bandwagon. I'm just hoping for a LMR that has a little room for a bit of dissent.*

The LMR has plenty of room for dissent, but one thing is clear: Allen stinks and that finish turned an entertaining contest into water cooler fodder. The NFL needs to fix this, but won't even admit guilt. And it will continue to fester in the postseason, marring the greatest sport in the world.

*Brad Allen walks into a bar...*

A man walks into a bar and sits next to a guy with a little head...

The guy replies, "well it's a bitter sweet story. You see when I was in the war my plane got shot down in the Pacific. I parachuted out and ended up on a deserted island."

He continued, "after several months on this deserted island, a beautiful mermaid suddenly appeared and granted me three wishes."

"My first wish is that I'd like to be rescued from this island I told her." To which the Mermaid said, "tomorrow a rescue boat will find you."

"My second wish is that I'd like to be rich for the rest of my days." The Mermaid said, "invest early in these companies, and you will be a wealthy man...and what is your final wish?"

"Well Mermaid, you know I've been stranded on this island for so long, and seeing as you are so beautiful, I'd wish for nothing more than to sleep with you."

The Mermaid sighed and said, "I cannot grant you that wish, you see I'm a half fish, it would not work."

Frustrated, the man said, "Well how about a little head then?"

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*Mrs. Brad Allen, we presume?*

**THE LOOKAHEAD**

Week Seventeen was pretty wild, with controversial officiating and a surprise upset at Philly. Arizona destroyed the Iggles, and the Pokes received a zebra-aided win to throw everything into a jumble in the NFC.

Without further ado, the Lookahead to Week Eighteen.

***Saturday***

***Blitzburgh Stillers at Baltimore Dumpster Ducks (-3.5) 4:15pm***

Baltimore simply destroyed Miami last week, securing an AFC Asgard crown and the One Seed in the AFC. The Look Man has questioned the presumptive MVP, Lamar (Action) Jackson's ability to throw outside the numbers, but Action proved him wrong on Sunday. After reviewing film from earlier in the season, Jackson's receivers have a lot of drops on well thrown balls. It would seem that the Mark Andrews injury has positioned Baltimore to correct a major weakness, and it could result in them dominating the postseason.

Alas, John Harbaugh is smartly resting starters in this contest, so the Stillers make the playoffs with a win and some help. They would garner a Wild Card spot with a Bills or J-Ville loss. They could also get in with an Indy/Texans tie, but that seems far-fetched.

Mason Rudolph (the Red Necked Reindeer) has been dropping thirty burgers since taking over for Trubisky, making Stillers Fan question why he didn't get a shot previously. The Look Man questions it also, but believes it goes back to the Myles Garrett Helmetgate incident. Irrespective Rudolph may save Christmas in Yinzerville. Stillers cover and beat a depleted Ducks team.

***Houston Slim Shadies at Indy Ponies (+1) 8:20pm***

The Look Man finds it interesting that the Ponies are a home dog in the late game. (Chauncey) Gardner Minshew has played them into position despite a crappy defense and limited offensive weapons. RB Jonathan Taylor simply owns Houston, having averaged a buck twenty and having seven TDs against them.

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But not so fast, my friend. Despite the loss of WR Tank Dell, Houston is putting up points with CJ Stroud. This defense is better than you think, and poised to be a contender. DeMeco Ryans has a legitimate claim to Coach of the Year, and this team could be the best in the AFC in two years.

The future starts today, as Houston takes out Indy. Slim Shadies.

**Sunday**

*Dallas Cowpokes at Washington Commies (+13)*

The Pokes deserved to lose to Detroit last week at home, irrespective of the call. They survived poor coaching by Mike McCarthy based upon even poorer coaching by Dan (Ankle Biter) Campbell. The Pokes veneer of home invincibility took a hit in Week Seventeen, and they average a dozen fewer points on the road.

Commies QB Sam (Thurston) Howe (III) has been up and down in 2023, and returns after an injury. The Pokes are in a weird spot; a win secures the NFC East Division crown and a Two Seed. A Pokes win, and losses by the Iggles and Niners could secure the One in the NFC. When it is all said and done, the Pokes could end up anywhere between a One and Five Seed.

The Look Man's conspiracy theory is that the NFL wants Jerrah Jones to get a ring before he dies. Aikman and the NFL brokered the deal to get Jimmy Johnson in the Pokes Ring of Honor last week, and this game would position Dallas to get some home cooking. The Look Man believes the Pokes eke out a win without covering, the Eagles lose to the G-Men, and the Niners win to retain the One.

Commies with the cover, and a snowball's chance at a win.

*Cleveland Browns at Cincinnati Bengals (-7)*

The Bengals' playoff hopes were dashed in Week Seventeen with a loss to the Baby Backs. The zebras contributed with a poor intentional grounding call that effectively ended the Nati season. Not only was Jake Browning (Automatic Rifle) hit while he threw, he had a receiver in the area and the ball went past the line of scrimmage.

The Look Man notes how many backup QBs are starting due to injury, and the NFL needs to fix this call. If you want QBs to remain healthy, you need to loosen up the interpretation. If a guy is in the area, and the ball gets to the LOS, swallow the whistle.

The Browns are starting all backups in this game; therefore, the spread is ridiculous. The Look Man likes the Browns to cover and win in a game that means little to either team. Finishing at 12-5 would be a high-water mark for the Browns, propelling them into the Tournament with momentum.

No Flacco, no problem as Cleveland ekes out a win in Dawg Pound South. Browns, baby, Browns.

*Tampa Bay Expensive Corn Kings at Carolina Black Cats (+4.5)*

The (Cool) Joe Flacco wouldn't be so poetic if (Cake) Baker Mayfield wasn't having a career year. Bake is putting up points with accurate passing and a reduction in turnovers. He suffered a significant rib injury, but is expected to tough it out on Sunday.

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That is the epitome of the Baker Cycle. He has played well, but lost to New Orleans to keep them alive. The NFC Souse now comes down to Tampa beating a hapless Carolina squad fresh off an owner controversy. Tepper has a snowball's chance in hell of getting calls in this game.

Perhaps the Look Man is just a Baker hater, but expect the Black Cats to rally. Carolina is better than they look on paper, and Bake is prime for a stinker where he hurts the team by playing injured. Carolina covers and win on a Bake turnover, setting up New Orleans to win the Souse. Cats.

*Crapchester Bisons at Miami Marine Mammals (+3) [Football Night in America]*

Miami laid an egg at Baltimore in Week Seventeen, perhaps because WR Jalen Waddle couldn't answer the bell. HC Mike (Eminem) McDaniels attempted to play horizontal against a speedy Baltimore defense, with predictable results.

Buffalo has no such speed, and the Look Man is fond of home dogs. QB Josh (Irwin) Allen has been stellar of late, so it is time for him to throw some picks. At his base, Allen is just a new version of Big Ben, without the injuries or the caginess.

Miami has beaten few good teams, but the Pokes victory in Week Sixteen provides some hope. The Cinderella Bisons turn into a pumpkin with a Week Eighteen defeat, and the Mammals are vulnerable in the postseason. Miami.

**EPILOGUE**

The wide-open AFC got serious competition when the Iggles blew it in a loss to Arizona. Dallas pole vaulted into a Two Seed and Week Eighteen now has drama for the NFC home field.

Over in the AFC, Stillers HC Mike Tomlin has created drama with his usual panache. The Stillers are just good enough to get into the Tournament and make some noise. The Look Man likes them to get in against all odds.

This week could be a milestone if Belicheat is relieved of his duties in Foxboro. The Look Man believes BB is chasing the all-time wins record, and will attempt to secure employment where that is most likely. The AFC picture is far from static, as KC, Crapchester and the Nati are taking a back seat to Baltimore this year, and possibly Cleveland and Houston in outyears.

2024 starts off with bang not a whisper, as all is revealed in Week Eighteen.

Peace,

The Look Man